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And Finally. I was always taught that one should never begin a sentence with the word "And". So having broken one of the first rules of English Grammar, I have hopefully kept one of the second, by getting your initial interest in this editorial. As most of you will know this is the final edition of Wavelength. The magazine was started in 1984 following on from Airspec News which was just about to close to brief was to "fill the gap". Having done that it was time to expand, however there comes a time when you have to look at what you are doing, and see if you can go any further. When you see that moving on is not possible you have to consider if things should stay the same. That in a nutshell is the reason why Wavelength is closing. I must stress that my interest in Free Radio is still there, and I am not leaving the cause altogether. My only, or should that be main annoyance is the people who insist that they are always right and that if Governments provide regulations for more Freedom of broadcasting that is a sell-out. I don't agree, but Radio, and most other things in life should always be progressive, looking to the future and never staying complacent. That, perhaps is what is wrong with Independent Local Radio, it's strange that Test transmissions always create an initial excitement around a station but once the official program starts, its back to square one. With the solid Gold format on the AM channels in many areas, nothing is really changing there either. Sadly the same argument could also be levelled at Radio Caroline.

To end may I thank everyone who has been involved with Wavelength for the past 4½ years. I won't mention names, in case I miss anyone, but you know who you are.

## M.V. ROSS REVENGE

Our Final voyage with the Lady.

November 5th, 1988.

With the return of a full service for both Dutch and English listeners, European Offshore Radio was in full swing once more, although Caroline's relaunch was something of a let down. Andy Bradgate handed over to Steve Conway during his programme on the evening of November 5th, and Monday morning was to see some staff changes with Steve and Andy both leaving the ship, and the others to be joined on board by Judy Murphy, Nigel Harris and a new name, American Chuck Reynolds. The line up read like this;

0500 Steve Masters  
0900 Judy Murphy  
1300 Chuck Reynolds  
1600 Nigel Harris  
2000 Chris Kennedy  
2400 Closedown

News duties were shared around the staff. We believe the closedowns may have been due to some generator difficulties. Radio 819 meanwhile continued on with a format not unlike its predecessor Radio 558.

The weekend of November 19th was given an international flavour with the Dutch members of Radio 819 joining the station which already had Canadian Judy Murphy, American Chuck Reynolds, and with the return of Steve Conway, after another short break two Irishmen, the other being Chris Kennedy. Bad weather conditions the following evening had Nigel Harris "Hanging on" during his programme.

A new member of staff fitted into the line up on November 21st, he was Tony Kirk and with the return of Ian Mack and Dave Asher the full schedule read thus;

0500 Ian Mack  
0900 Judy Murphy  
1200 Chuck Reynolds  
1500 Nigel Harris  
1800 Dave Asher  
2100 Tony Kirk  
2400 Closedown

News : Steve Conway.

Chris Kennedy and Steve Masters left the Ross Revenge at this time.

November 22nd brought an unexpected tribute at the start of the Chuck Reynolds show. "On behalf of the owner and management of Radio Caroline" Chuck paid tribute to the late JFK - John F. Kennedy on the 25th anniversary of his death. It is not very often that Caroline breaks from its format, but JFK is one of Ronan O'Rahilly's heroes, it was Caroline Kennedy, the former US president's daughter which gave the world famous station a name. The record played here was "Has anyone seen my old friend John."

November 25th was another anniversary. One Year since the collapse of the main aerial mast. The News bulletins throughout the day looked back to what had occurred on the station since and forward to the 25th Anniversary broadcasts of the station this coming Easter.

The next week saw many new staff joining the station, however something of a reverse mutiny took place. The staff on board were having such a good time that when the new tender arrived nobody wanted to come off the ship! The result considerably shorter programmes, and at weekends a whole new line up whilst the weekday staff put their feet up!



The schedule for the week commencing November 28th.

0400 Steve Richards	
0600 Ian Mack	News;
0900 Judy Murphy	Steve Conway
1300 Dave Asher	
1600 Nigel Harris	
1900 Neil Gates	
2100 Tony Kirk	
2200 Ian Palmer	
2300 Kevin Nelson	

Ian Palmer and Judy Murphy left the ship on December 10th, this was to be Judy's last stint with the station although she had left a pre-recorded programme to be broadcast over the Christmas holiday.

The schedule was moved around once more, with manageable staff levels. There were no direct replacements for Ian and Judy.

0400 Kevin Nelson	
0600 Ian Mack	News;
0900 Nigel Harris	Steve Conway
1300 Dave Asher	
1600 Steve Richards	
1900 Neil Gates	
2100 Tony Kirk	
2300 Kevin Nelson	
0000 Closedown	

Some excellent commercials have recently been aired for Lotto 649. Recorded primarily by Judy Murphy and also featuring some of the other DJs on board. Based around the theme of what could be done with the Top prize, Buy a copper topped battery factory or an Offshore radio station with a 300 foot mast?

In addition some voice overs and commercials have been recorded for the station by a number of well known artists including the Four Tops, London Beat "9 am with Radio Caroline. . ." and Womack and Womack.

December 23rd saw the start of special programmes for the Christmas season, although Yuletide records had already started to find themselves into the format. An appeal was staged for the victims and families of the Clapham Rail disaster. The crew gave up their rations for a 24 hour fast, and listeners were encouraged to send their donations to the appeal fund.

During Christmas Eve and Christmas Day cards were read out on the air, and on Christmas Morning the two stations Radio Caroline and Radio 819 linked up during Steve Conway's morning programme. Caroline was running a full 24 hour service over the festive season, as is done every weekend.

New Year's Eve sadly brought the final programme from Judy Murphy. Judy joined the station during the Summer whilst the station was still running night time broadcasts only. From 1000 -1200 she presented the "Ones that got away" from the Music of the past year. Afterwards Steve Conway, Nigel Harris and Neil Gates got together in the studio for a farewell tribute and played her Starmaker, by the Kids From Fame. Steve continued the programmes at 1200 also mentioned Chuck Reynolds who has also moved on (see People) Steve counted down the Top 60 of 1988, as voted by the DJs. The Pet Shop Boys' Domino Dancing was Number One, primarily because of the association with the return to daytime broadcasting. Its "All Day, all day" introduction was used by Steve Masters in his promotional trailer for the return.

The New Year was seen in with Style, Steve Conway was "In charge" although it was hard to tell at times from the noise in the Studio. a criticism was the insistence to play backing music every time there was talk in the studio, quite irritating.

January 2nd saw a surprise return to the station for Caroline Martin who presented the evening slot starting at 2100. A revised line up was presented from January 3rd including the return of Powerdrive, and an on the hour New service. A new station identification, still incorporating the famous Caroline Bell is now heard on the hour, the voice behind this is Dave Asher.

0400 Mick Jackson
0600 Nigel Harris
0900 Neil Gates
1300 Dave Asher
1600 Powerdrive: Steve Conway
2000 Caroline Martin
2400 News, followed by Closedown.

The end of the week was marred by technical breakdowns, particularly on Thursday when several closedowns were made. In particular the audio sounded very distorted.

Line up changes were made the following week, Caroline Martin having joined the daytime cast list at the weekend, so the line up for most of the week commencing January 9th read;

0500 Nigel Harris
0900 Caroline Martin
1300 Neil Gates
1600 Dave Asher
1900 Mick Jackson
2300 Neil Gates
0100 Closedown.

Steve Conway was busy chatting with Nigel Harris on January 19th, in fact the breakfast show was to be Nigel's last for the time being with Steve taking over the programme the next day.

Things have also been moving on 819kHz. Radio 819, the Dutch Service continues from day to day and broadcasting hours have now been increased. From the end of Viewpoint on Saturday night, usually at around 2200, Radio 819 transmits further programmes in the Dutch language. These programmes which commenced in mid December are mainly on Tape.

English language programmes on 819 have also commenced, no doubt to the pleasure of many people in Offshore Radio still pining after the end of Overdrive, the alternative rock service which ended in 1987. "Caroline 819" commenced on January 24th, after announcements on 558 pointed us in the right direction on our dials. Rob Harrison opened the channel at 2200, he programmed until 0100 when it was the turn of Colin Muesli-Bar (Yes, we think its stupid as well) A format of classic tracks and current rock music was noted, sounding more commercial than Caroline Overdrive ever did. The service will run on weekdays only as Radio 819, as we mentioned above already use the channel on a Saturday night and on Sundays the religious programmes continue for considerably longer, making it impracticable to start the rock service on that evening.

The Short Wave service, World Mission Radio was missing during much of January after the aerial mast for this service collapsed. It has since been rebuilt and programmes from the station have since recommenced on 6215. We believe the date to be January 24th.

Caroline 558 itself has now returned to 24 hour broadcasts, although a weekly break to check the generators is required. Work is currently being carried out on increasing the transmitter power on both 819 and 558. The Dutch service optimistically announced that the power increase would take place February 1st, although no dramatic change has been noted.

## PEOPLE

The return to daytime broadcasting has brought many new names to Caroline. Kevin Nelson was formally working in Ireland on Hits 954 write Anoraks UK. Nick Jackson does not have any connection with the BBC Radio 2 presenter of the same name. Meanwhile Caroline Martin who has not been heard for a couple of years was engaged to Mark Matthews, now working with Invicta Radio in Kent. The couple were previously working for British Telecom in Cambridge.

Judy Murphy has now moved to Radio Luxembourg where she uses the name of Jody Scott, she has only changed the name and is still very pleasant to listen to Jody's first show on 1440kHz was on January 14th. Chuck Reynolds who spent just one stay with Caroline is now on London Oldie station Capital Gold, Randall Lee Rose is the new name being used by Chuck. It proves that Caroline can still make names and move people on to other radio jobs successfully.

## GREAT BRITAIN

RADIO KRYSTEL (1) who have been part of the British Short Wave scene for many years made their final broadcast on November 11th. Many factors contributed to the closure, amongst them the proposed ban on operators from legal radio in the United Kingdom after January 1st, 1989 and rumours of a purge on Short Wave Radio stations across Britain by the DTI. Krystel originally broadcast on Bank Holidays, before switching to the 4th Sunday format in the Autumn of 1986. The first broadcast took place in 1981.

WFRL continue to be heard with regular programmes on 48 and 41 metres, in addition to their Worldwide service. Additional broadcasts took place over the Christmas Holiday period on the 48 metre band frequency, 6300. Increased interference around that channel has meant that WFRL, like near neighbours Britain Radio on 6304 are looking for another frequency, and it has been decided that from February 12th the second Sunday programmes will switch to 6275 kHz. The Tender Trip programme will shortly be returning to the station after a break of two months. Adrian Cooke took over the 1100-1200 slot during the absence of Iain Johnston. The 41 metre broadcasts, heard on the 1st Sunday of the month of 7385 are being given a new look, this includes a Monthly Powerplay to be aired at the start of every hour. The Worldwide service aired during the first week of the month on various frequencies currently has a four hour cycle of Programmes including the Magazine Worldwatch, Rock Music and the Top 20 album chart. (2)

RADIO EAST COAST COMMERCIAL (2) continue as the most regular of the UK Short Wave stations, most weeks on 6815 with Norman Nelson playing a selection of Rock'n Roll and other Oldies, requests are preferred for records at least four years old in order to bring more variety. The first Sunday transmission features the popular Dx programme compiled for the station by Neal West. Broadcasts start at 1100 (UK Time) On Christmas Morning Norman took telephone calls from listeners, the number had been previously given in most leading Free Radio Publications. As is often the case this kind of listener participation is most interesting. It is a pity that security reasons mean that it cannot be a regular feature. It also reflects the fact that letter writing is a dying art. Not just between friends, relatives and lovers but to Radio stations as well. Listeners must remember that the letter is the most valuable item a Free Radio station can receive. It is the only way of gauging whether or not their efforts are worthwhile. I am sure Norman will agree with the sentiments. Also on Christmas Lay there was a report on the annual charity swim into the Wash.

ATLANTA RADIO (2) have been active recently with three broadcasts, two of them being on the same day! On December 11th the channel was 6285, whilst on January 22nd 6238 and 6275 were chosen. The reason was that Atlanta were celebrating Ten years of broadcasting, which was commemorated

by the transmission of the Atlanta Radio Story heard on both frequencies, and available from the Radio Broadcast Library at £3.00 Sterling (cheques to be made payable to RBL) The programme was narrated by Tim Stewart. Earlier in the day the two channels had broadcast separate programmes including Atlanta Soundabout and Music programmes from Phil Collins and Paul Graham.

BRITAIN RADIO (3&4) made their regular broadcast on December 11th and then the Boxing Day broadcast live at Christmas. However as mentioned earlier the station has been experiencing problems with the amount of interference from co-users around their normal 6304 channel. Therefore on January 1st, during a test broadcast on 6238 Station Manager Roger Davis announced that BRI was suspending regular broadcasts until a regular frequency, clear of interference could be found. Amongst other frequencies being considered are 6225, 6230 and 6270. Roger's feelings on the suspension of programmes is that there is very little point in spending time putting them together when nobody can hear them. During the time off the air an equaliser has been added to the mixer, this should improve the overall audio quality.

After a considerable absence KLA RALIC (5) have resumed transmissions once more. They were heard regularly through December on 6260 and 6254, the latter was in use over the Christmas period. Reception in the UK was moderate, and described as being poor in Europe.

With two Atlanta Radio broadcasts already on the air January 22nd became even more confusing with the arrival of Radio Atlantis Short Wave. The station apologised for missing their promised Christmas broadcast. This was due to problems the station had been experiencing following a raid on their FM service late last year. (6).

WEEKEND MUSIC RADIO (7) made its usual Christmas transmissions putting in a strong signal on 6317 with a 100 watts transmitter on Christmas Day and Boxing Day. In addition a further transmitter on 15044 was used, although technical problems meant that this outlet was not on air all the time. From Boxing Day WMR remained on the air through the night until 1100 on Holiday Tuesday, December 27th.

## IRELAND

December 31st was the deadline set by the Irish Authorities, after which severe fines and prison sentences would be imposed on anyone connected with unlicensed radio broadcasting. The closure looks like having a major effect on Short Wave Free Radio. In recent years many stations, particularly from the UK have come to rely on Ireland's easy going attitude to unlicensed radio to enable them to make high powered transmissions from Ireland to Europe. Amongst them the Scottish Free Radio Network, and more recently Radio Fax, which produced a technical information service running twenty four hours a day, with a medium wave outlet replacing the Short Wave transmitter through the night. Fax closed on Friday 30th December, freeing the Short Wave transmitter to allow a relay of the closure of Boyenide Radio the next day. The 6250 transmitter formerly used by Radio Rainbow was also used for this purpose. December 31st saw the final broadcast for many of the popular Short Wave stations Westside Radio, 6280, Radio Mi Amigo 6245 and Riverside Radio 6304. However Dublin Commercial station Radio Dublin defied the

FM	88	92	96	100	104	108	MHz		
SW	6.0	6.5	8.0	10.0	13.0	18.0	MHz		
MW	54	60	70	80	100	120	140	160	kHz
LW	150	170	190	220	250	270	285	kHz	

authorities, the station's 6910 transmitter has remained on the air, along with the medium wave 1188, whilst station owner Eamon Cooke fights it out with both the Irish Courts and the ESB, who were threatening to remove his Electricity Supply.

Of the relay stations the Scottish Free Radio Network of Stella, Crusin' Solid Gold etc closed during Mid December. WLR made their final 6230 broadcast on Boxing Day, December 26th, but were heard on 6318 on January 1st. The location of this transmitter is unknown, however the station is planning to continue if it can. Speaking of the closures Westside Radio's Prince Terry told Wavelength "I am very sad about the whole thing maybe it is the beginning of Real Free Radio in Ireland". It remains to be seen.

As a footnote the Anoraks Ireland organisation has also folded due to the legislation and the 310 Collins Avenue West address is no longer available.

As a result of the Irish legislation the International Radio Relay Service are moving their transmitters to a new location. No definite decision has yet been made although Italy is a possibility. RADIO SUSAN closed down on January 1st, this was their final broadcast. The decision was made by Tony King due to the Irish legislation, and other commitments. Meanwhile Phil is joining Falcon Radio who are moving into this New Year with a revised format. The station will be known as Falcon Radio: The Rock of Europe and will play rock music from the 1950s through to the 80s with presenters Peter Moss, Tony King, Mike Allen, and Phil who will host the Power Hour. In addition Patrick Champvert will be on hand with the French Service. 6875 is the frequency used so far in 1989 by the station(9)

## EUROPE

FRS HOLLAND (8) made their first broadcast for 1989 with a transmission on 6240, January 15th. Reception on the Continent was good however not so in the UK where reception was poor, we missed it altogether.

Other stations currently operating on the European Continent include; Radio Black Power, Radio Arena, Radio Action, Súd West Radio and Radio Titanic, who are shortly to clock up their 100th transmission.

During the holiday period a New station was heard testing with the name IX INTERNATIONAL. No 6TH available at the time, but stated they hoped to have one in the near future. During the tests a couple of frequencies were used namely 6277 and 6630.

## ADDRESSBOOK

1. 294 Godstone Road, Whitely, Surrey, England.
2. Po Box 5, Hunstanton, Norfolk PE36 5AU
3. 32 Victoria Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 2NE.
4. Postbus 19074 - 3501 DB Utrecht, The Netherlands.
5. BK Nectar, London, WC1N 3XX.
6. 128 Kingfisher Drive, Eastbourne, Surrey.
7. 42 Arran Close, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge, England.
8. Postbus 41, 7700 AA Dedemsvaart, The Netherlands
9. Po Box 10, Northampton.

## LISTENER'S GUIDE

### TABLE OF REGULAR FREE RADIO BROADCASTERS

6215	World Mission Radio / Radio Caroline (558)		
	International Waters		Daily
6275	WFRL: Wonderful Free Radio London	GB	2nd Sunday
6290	Radio Orion	GB	Most Sundays
6815	Radio East Coast Commercial	GB	Every Sunday
7385	WFRL: Wonderful Free Radio London	GB	1st Sunday
Other regular stations with no fixed schedule			
6285	Radio Apollo	GB	
	Free Radio Service Holland		3rd Sunday
	Britain Radio International (testing)		

### WFRL WORLDWIDE

Worldwatch; Andy Walker and Dave Martin, UK Top Twenty Album Show; Adrian Cooke, Rock Show; Tony Wolfe.

First Saturday; 9970kHz 31 metres 0000-2400 UTC

Following Wednesday 12108kHz 25 metres 0000-2400 UTC

Following Saturday; 11170kHz 25 metres 0000-2400 UTC

9922 may replace 9970, Currently under test 25845

Schedule subject to last minute revision

## LONDON

### Andy Walker

Well, this is it Kiddies, the last issue of Wavelength, and the last time I write this column. A general look at Free Radio at the moment will tell anyone that it is in a bad way, a slump I would put it. The new laws that came into force on December 31st, 1988, meant that the Irish stations had to close, and in the United Kingdom, mainland pirates if they wanted to apply for one of the licences that will be available later this year. Everyone shouts about how great it will be to have more stations on the air, legally. It's not the type of Free Radio I've been fighting for since 1975, but I suppose we should be grateful for small mercies. Offshore Radio isn't that hot either. I know many people who feel let down by Radio Caroline, many things were promised but in my view and in many of my friends view as well Radio Caroline is still boring and nothing has changed since she returned to all day broadcasting on 558, I for one don't listen to her anymore. I don't think I'm turning my back on Free Radio by not listening to the Lady, but enough is enough and here in London, we have two new Radio stations on the air. GLR (Greater London Radio) 94.9FM /1458 AM (Formerly BBC Radio London) plays the type of music I want to hear, AOR, all day. The second station is Capital Gold 1548AM, they also play music I like to listen to, Oldies 24 hours a day. So why would I want to listen to Caroline, with trashy top 40 music, with the odd rock and oldies track thrown in here and there. The free Radio press (that's what I call it) likes to suck up to Caroline, tell us how great it is, and all the Anoraks follow like sheep believing it, because it's an Offshore Free Radio (Pirate) station. I have my own opinion and I think for myself, and here at Wavelength we are all

the same individual people who write for one magazine, with our own views, at least we speak out, not suck up! It's been nice to have as much space as I want in this final, bumper issue of Wavelength, fire off my views and tell you the more seedier side of London's pirate stations. But first news of the big plug pulling session and the end of 1988. Many of the major soul stations have closed down so they can apply for a licence. Solar Radio, Kiss FM and LWR, the big three have all gone, so have LGR (London Greek Radio), but a few continue like Rock to Rock 90.2, Time Radio 102.2, Classic 94.2, and Hits FM have changed their name to Cityside Radio 98.4FM. However things are not quite what they seem. A new project on the Horizon is already on the air. Non-stop music is being broadcast on 93.9 to keep 94FM clear. This hush hush project is being put together by LWR. While they wait for their licence application to go through Government Channels, they plan to come back on the air as Reach FM. They were going to call it Radio London, but this has now been scrapped. I also understand that LWR will return to London's airwaves with or without a licence, we shall see. LWR used to have pirate radio's most powerful link transmitter, 250 watts. Kiss FM avoided studio raids in their last year on the air due to their extra safe linking system. The studio was plugged into a 1400mhz link Tx, which transmitted to an intermediate link receiver and link tx on 480mhz which went to the main transmitter on 94FM. So now you know, don't you Eric!

Big Apple 102.4 are new to London's airwaves pumping out Soul to the capital which is now in Short Supply, but is still the major music output of London's pirates. Star Radio have moved to 93.1FM and are still 24 hours 7 days a week. They were formerly on 102.1FM. Supreme 90.4 another newish station coming out of North London they seem to be doing very well with advertisers. Another station which has been on the air for a couple of months is Broadway Radio 106.1FM in North Kent. The station is on the air every weekend and a few nights during the week after midnight. It also ran 24 hours over Christmas with a mixture of Rock and pop mixed with old Offshore recordings. A nice signal is heard within its target area, but the programmes are of a very weak standard, but it keeps the locals happy - They must be easily pleased. The first week of the New Year saw the DTI out raiding once again. Supreme 90.4 were raided that day, and also Rock to Rock in the late evening. They had a full studio bust, but were back by the weekend.

Meantime Radio 90FM were new on the air over the first weekend of the New Year with a low quality audio signal. It was great to hear RFM (Rock FM) with a good signal at my location. Meantime are using a low power band 2 transmitter from the studio to the main transmitter on a tower block in Woolwich. The link is received on an old Amstrad music centre, which is also sitting on the roof of the tower block. One of the best new stations I've heard is Q102 102.4FM Stereo, good audio and Stereo separation with a fine signal here in South East London. The station has been put together by DJs from some of the big stations such as Solar, JFM etc. They were busted at night on the 28th/29th January, let's hope they stay on air for many months to come.

Ex-London Soul pirate, Chicago FM, who are no longer on the air went out with a bang. After its second studio raid, and the loss of everything, the operators took to armed robbery to get back on the airwaves. They planned to hold up a Kentucky Fried Chicken Take Away food shop. Needless to say things didn't go as planned and at least one of the DJ raiders is now serving time in prison.

One of the greatest stories which left the DTI with egg on their faces, but an incident they wouldn't shout about is going to be told here. Hits FM used a tower block in West London to broadcast from, and their dipole was fixed to a mast which had repeaters for Heathrow airport attached. No interference from the Hits Tx on the airport repeaters was reported, but when the DTI raided the station, not only did they remove the transmitter, they took down the repeater mast to remove the Hits aerial, and left the repeater mast lying on the roof. How does a Government department account for itself, by an act which could possibly endanger life? This irresponsible action by people who should know better should not be pushed under the car-

pet unnoticed. Hits FM should have never used the site, I for one would not install a transmitter and aerial on anything other than a television mast, but maybe the management of the station, now called Cityside Radio are more worried about making money from their 0898 telephone calling service, which is used for advertising on the station. More bad news from the DTI, comes in the form of an enterprising pirate person, who for a weekly fee will let stations know when they are about to be raided. This is done by monitoring the DTI's radio frequencies on which they talk about their business on. After they have heard of a raid, the monitor phones the station with the tip off. The day and time. This gives the operators time to switch off, and move everything. I've heard its 100% safe. Which is good if the Studio is about to be raided by those in the know.

Ex NMR DJ Simon James has been asking around London's pirates for an FM transmitter, he has plans to start an Oldies station on Sunday evenings in the East End of the city. Meanwhile I've heard that there could be a new weekly publication on offer to Free Radio addicts, similar to Weekly Report, the newsheet would come out once a week, and could be bigger and cheaper than its North Country counterpart. The budding editor would also have an Infoline, and is looking at the 0898 telephone service so that he could make Loadsamoney from the phone calls.

Lets look towards Easter; Big L, Radio London may return to the airwaves for just one day, with original jingles, format and even the bleeps during the news. The biggest pirate project ever on land maybe broadcast on MW, FM and two or three Short Wave outlets. All the programmes would be live and a telephone line would be in operation so stay tuned. Talking of Big L SW style, my very own baby WFRL is pushing up its power to 300 watts and we also plan to transmit on the 11 metre band very soon. To help with operating problems in the big City we are planning to use a vertical antenna system.

Those Pop rockers at Raiders have had a name change and returned to the airwaves as Magic Radio 105.4FM, with a mixture of Rock and Pop Music, Lets hope it works this time lads. Yet another new project testing is Harp FM 88.4. I first heard them testing on January 20th with a good signal late in the evening with what sounds like Gary Stevens (Ex-hits) Veronica 102 DJ. Maybe we have another station changing its name, but Gary still sounds as Sickly as the lager tastes.

As mentioned earlier the two new legal stations GLR and Capital Gold are going great guns and picking up many listeners. Capital Gold have a good line up which starts the day with the original Breakfast Show hosted by Tony Blackburn. Kenny Everett is on in the afternoons with his usual fun and madness. There are also ex-pirates Dave Cash and Paul Burnett on the station. Moving over to the BBC GLR have Nick Abbott on Breakfast who speaks his mind about everything and has been known to use minor swear words over the airwaves. The great Johnnie Walker has a three hour lunch-time slot with music interviews, and News which mixes together very well. Yet another ex-pirate Tommy Vance has his daily Drivetime show with some good rock.

In the last issue of Wavelength I spoke of the Engineer who made transmitters for stations, then stole them, then re-sold them back. In fact this gentkeman is as Sid in Weekly Report puts it. "The Phantom tx nicker of old London Town". In fact he does work for a very well known London Soul station as their engineer, this station has been removing other stations transmitters for quiet a while, and they have never been found out. Big bussiness which was behind the station meant that the operation had gangster connections and that the criminals which run London's nightclubs and put up the money which kept it on the air, didn't want competition because the DJs played at their night spots and plugged them heavily on the air. I shall say no more on that.

London Rock are still going strong on a Sunday on 98.1 FM and it was reported that RFL - Radio Free London) were back on London's airwaves over Christmas with a test.

In this final issue of Wavelength I can now reveal the transmitter engineers who build the equipment which is used by the London stations. A good engineer doesn't come cheap, and if you want them to supply a studio as well, plus install everything the cost runs into thousands of pounds. One company who

says it doesn't do work for "Pirate Stations", but does can fit you out with a full studio with limiter, Link tx, receiver and aerials, plus the 60 watt Band 2, fully remote controlled, with installation for just under £4,000! The other mainmen charge about the same. As you can see many stations have been well ripped off, and if you know the right phone numbers, the gentleman at the other end will relieve you of your cash. Done, and you have been! On the other hand you can find an engineer who isn't a conman! Link tx and receiver 45 watt band 2 aerials just £350 and yes it is remote controlled for that price as well. Beware of Mail Order txs, most of them are of poor quality, but good old Chris Evans is one of the best, if you go to him you'll get a good rig and a good deal!

On that note I shall leave you. Using the words of an Ex Caroline jock, "It's been a Slice". Its been great writing for Wavelength, and I for one will miss it. I'm off to another magazine to Cover Short Wave Free Radio Activity. So off into the sunset I go, Pen and Paper in hand, and operators beware! Walkers writing about you out there!!

## MIDLANDS

### John Hickling

Well another year has gone by and still we await the Government to make licences available for the many stations wanting to set up Community Radio. Every year "Free Radio" activity in the UK seems to be more prominent than the year before and I am sure that the DTI men realise that they are fighting a losing battle. Nottingham's first (permanent) community station seems to strongly emphasise the need for the ethnic minorities to have their own stations to associate with. Although most of the time on HEATWAVE COMMUNITY RADIO (105) reggae/raggamuffin style sounds are heard, the station definitely does a lot to promote local talent, businesses and social events, joining together all people enjoying this type of music. However it seems that 99% of all artists featured on the station are coloured/black. Other musical styles featured are rap, hip-hop/break, acid, soul, rare groove, mowtown, inspirational gospel, lovers' rock and the odd black pop tracks (s)

I hope Radio Freedom from Derby will broadcast more regular over the coming year. This year they've only been logged on air for three separate days, spread over the entire year.

One project I think could well be a good idea is to have one national radio station to relay various community stations from throughout the UK around the clock.

#### Nottingham.

HEATWAVE COMMUNITY RADIO (105.0 MHz stereo FM) (Black Reggae/Soul) The powerful signal continues to be picked up in the North Midlands and South Yorkshire regions. Despite the Government's recommendation that after the beginning of 1989 any 'pirate' station still operating would not be considered for a Community broadcasting licence, HCR continues to defy the law, apparently oblivious of the fact. It should be interesting to see whether the station can continue to operate. A regular programme every Thursday night around 2100-2200 is the DJ Soaker (Soca) Man and his choice of Calypso/Affro-Caribbean style music, which makes a change from the Reggae/Raggamuffin sounds. The station celebrated its first successful year of broadcasting with a party held on Friday 21st January at the Marcus Garvey centre on Lenton Boulevard, Nottingham.

#### NORTH MIDLANDS.

At this location near Chesterfield, North Midlands Radio (105.5) were heard on Sunday 18th December and Friday 23rd. The Sunday broadcast started at 1500 and the Friday's at 1945 ZFM (102.4) were heard testing on Friday 23rd (nighttime) with numerous breaks in transmission and drifts of frequency. Signal was reasonable in mono but very hissy in stereo. BRITANIA RADIO (98.2) has been heard on Christmas Day from 1200-1220, in good mono, but again very hissy stereo and with some bleedover from Radio One FM. The DJ was Ken Crescendo.

(Anthony Page, Derbyshire)

#### WEST MIDLANDS

Neither PCRL (103.5) nor Quest FM (104.1) were heard on air January 8th although a strong signal relaying 'hiss' on 104 was evident which was probably Quest's main transmitter or, even, PCRL. METRO RADIO (104.9) broadcasts each weekend from 2200 Friday until 2400 on the following Sunday. A new weekend station, RADIO 104 or FM104 has recently opened. Likewise with metro, it is an Ethnic community station, and both have aired adverts for PCRL's going off-air party. FM104 was first heard testing on Thursday night January 12th. QUEST FM are now noted on the PCRL 103.5 frequency and were on the air over the weekend of January 14th/15th. On the Saturday they were on from 1200-2300, when they went off due to technical problems. They were in fact using the name SUNRISE COMMUNITY RADIO on Saturday, but by the next day they had returned as Quest FM. Again more technical problems had forced the station to start its Sunday broadcast late at 1530-2200. DJs on the station included Al Capone with rare groove/hits, TNT with hip hop, and MJ Swift with soul/house music. MACR continue to be heard in the evenings

Anthony Page.

#### handsworth

ENTERPRISE FM (91.9 MHz FM) (Black reggae/Soul). Has not been heard since 31st December 1988; at the time of compiling this report they still haven't returned to the air, so it is possible that they have left the air in order to apply for a Community Radio licence.

It is probable that ex-enterprise and PCRL DJs and technical staff have closed down the two stations but in the meantime have begun operating new black stations under different names probably in an effort to protect the old names so they may be used once community licences have been made available - so in effect neither PCRL or ENTERPRISE have shut down; they've resumed their programmes under new station names with slight location changes. (Section editor's opinion)

#### Solihull

KISS-FM (105.5) the "Dance station" from Solihull was last heard, in this area on December 12th at 2355 featuring late night reggae music. Nothing has been heard since and it is presumed that they have now closed.

#### West Bromwich

POWERHOUSE RADIO (105.0) (Popular Music station)

The station certainly lives up to its name; giving a very clear and strong FM signal, which is received, as far away as Clowne in Derbyshire not far from the South Yorkshire border. DJs heard include Mr.X and Paul H. The frequently used telephone request/dedication line is (021) 559 3249. Besides Modern Pop, lots of oldies are featured including Rock and Roll. Throughout the month PHN continues to operate 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

#### HUMBERSIDE

#### Scunthorpe

WLNG (104.9 MHz FM)

This station was heard on January 3rd, featuring an interview with Stuart Graham of the Scunthorpe Radio Group.

Anthony Page.

## NORTH WEST

RADIO VERONICA who have been operating now for some 3½ years will be taking a break from the air after their broadcast on February 12th. They can still be reached at 81 Lark Lane, Liverpool L17 8UP.

CONCEPT RADIO are operating on Sundays only on 97.7. CTH is 18 Glynne Street, Bootle, L20 6DP.

HORIZON RADIO. This station has been reported back on the air testing on 102 MHz. No other information available at the moment. Radio Julie are also reported to have returned to 104.8, but can only be heard locally.

RADIO ATLANTIS - this station operates Saturday/Sunday on 1197 from around 1000 - 2200. Of late a very strong signal has been heard throughout the North West. Address is 1 Yew Tree Lane, Liverpool L12 9HG.

RADIO MERSEY WAVES - Not heard regularly of late due to a number of problems. Normally operates Friday to Monday on 1242kHz. Address is 126 Curlew Way, Wirral, L46 7SS.

NORTH COAST RADIO - Another station with a very good signal operating Friday to Monday on 1350. CTH is 79 Kestrel Road, Wirral, L46 6BW.

### MANCHESTER AREA.

A number of stations have been operating recently from the City including WELS on 102.4 and LASER on 103.5

Also still going strong from Cheshire each Sunday evening is VIEWPOINT on 96.3 with religious programmes.

## Adrian Cooke

The launch of the Astra Satellite has given the British Media something new to talk about for a few months. Many of the reports have created the impression that Satellite Television is totally new. This maybe the case for many people, now having access for the first time through the new budget priced dishes and receivers, however it is not exactly true. The current Eutelsat and Intelsat Satellites have carried Satellite programmes to Cable companies for the past two years or so, and because of the different bandwidths for audio and video channels, extra space has been "found" for added Sound channels. The Sports Network Screensport has been able to take advantage of this by adding French and German Commentaries to its programmes, whilst on other Satellite channels there is room for Satellite Radio channels. From the United Kingdom relays of the BBC World Service are transmitted around Europe, often picked up and relayed on FM. Currently there is only one Unique service, Radio Radio, "The Super Station" partly owned by the Virgin group under Richard Branson. Radio Nova closed in January after financial difficulties. Marketing the station was difficult, a problem Radio Radio is also finding. It is reported that Richard Branson will not put any more money into the project.

### The Stations;

#### VOA EUROPE

Transmitted from Washington, USA, a subsidiary of the state funded Voice of America VOA Europe is relayed on FM around Europe including stations in West Germany and Italy. The format covers the lighter end of the AOR spectrum, and the music is interspersed with features about life in Europe and the USA, News is on the hour either from the main output of the Voice of America, or at peak times especially prepared bulletins. European weather is also added. The pace of the station is helped by the fact that there are no Commercials. Syndicated Shows are broadcast, mainly at the weekends, and amongst those taken are American Top Forty, now hosted by Shadow Stevens, Rock and Roll never forgets, and the Country Countdown. In the evenings the station joins the main output of VOA. The material is available Free to operators of other stations should they wish to use it. A similar arrangement is used for the BBC World Service.

### RADIO RADIO "THE SUPER STATION"

Essentially not a station as such this satellite feed is available on the audio channel for Super Channel. A test tone is heard through the day, the exception being Sunday when London News station LBC is carried, this includes the Network Chart Show between 1700 and 1900. Programming is a mix of Pop/AOR with Star name presenters including Johnathon Ross, Snooker Star Steve Davis, who presents an interesting Soul Show, Phil Kennedy (ex-Radio One) and Lixie Peach (ex-Radio One and Radio Caroline). Programming runs from 2200 through until 0600 the next morning.

### SKY RADIO

Could this be Europe's most boring Radio station? A non-stop selection of MOR Music, interspersed with only the occasional promotional announcement. The DJ was removed because it was regarded as a language barrier to a Eurowide Radio station! Commercials are yet to appear. The station is programmed in Holland by Rob de Boer productions for Sky and all the music is on Compact Disc. The playlist can be found on Skytext Page 140.

### CABLE ONE

"The station of the Stars" - we've heard that before somewhere. Another MOR station with a team of mainly Dutch DJs presenting programming in English, drifting into Dutch for some of the links. Commercials are in English / Dutch, with News read in Dutch on the hour and in English during the day on the half-hour. Many Ex- Offshore presenters can be found on the station.

In addition to the above there is STARSAT RADIO, A German Non Stop Top 40 station, and Radio Tien again with a Top 40 format but presented entirely in the Dutch language. In addition RTL provides a relay of the German service of Radio Luxembourg on its sub-channel to RTL plus. This joins the English language service at midnight.

Satellite Radio like its visual counterpart is only in its infancy and mistakes will no doubt be made. Cable One with its Radio Two like format is the only one so far to have really pulled off enough success to continue, and when in twenty years time we look back on the beginnings, will any of the Satellite Radio pioneers still be there?

Recommended reading to make life after Wavelength more bearable.

### ACTIVITY MAGAZINE.

A relatively new publication devoted to Short Wave Free Radio, and featuring articles by Britain Radio's Roger Davis and our very own Andy Walker. 20 pages for £1 from Activity Magazine, 3 Greenway, Harold Park, Romford Essex, England. RM3 0HH.

### FRS GOES EX.

A monthly publication from Europe's Top Free Radio station. Featured is Short Wave, Offshore, News about FRS Holland, and feature items. Subscriptions: DM 21.50 / £ 21.50 / £6.25 - outside Europe US\$13.00

Be a real OFFSHORE and especially a CAROLINE fan and become a member of the CAROLINE RADIO CLUB. Send your name and address and I IRC/19p stamp/ £0.75/ 13 Bfrs to

CRG, Po Box 319, 2690 AH GZAND, The Netherlands and you'll receive within two weeks full details about the Caroline Radio Club and Offshore Magazine plus a mini sticker of Radio Caroline/Radio 619.

## Steve West

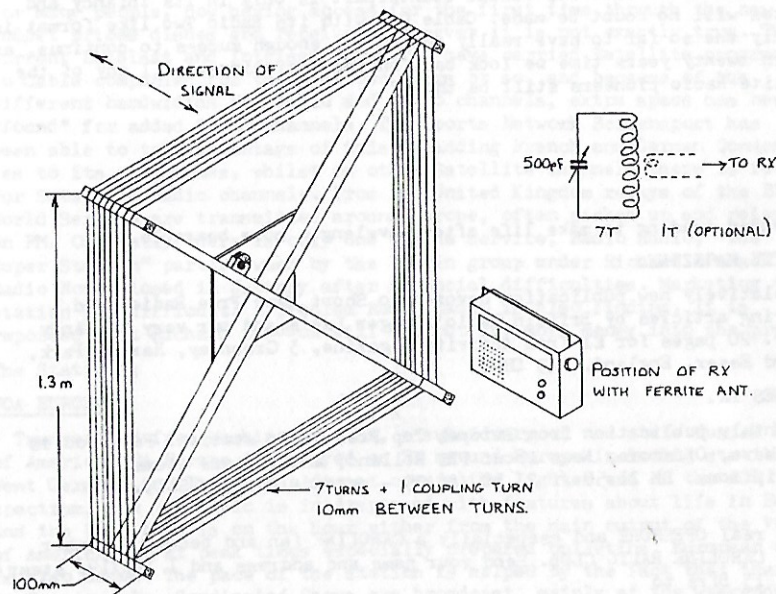
"Do a final technical article" he says, so here we go: How to build your very own loop aerial in one easy lesson.

Take two pieces of wood about 1.3m long (size is up to you) and join in the middle to form a cross. Fit suitable bracing to stop it moving and 100mm wide pieces to the ends of the cross. Next wind seven turns of plastic covered or enamelled copper wire around the pieces on the ends of the legs, keeping each turn about 10mm from the next. Fit a variable capacitor (500pf) to the frame (an old radio tuning cap will do) and connect to the ends of the wire and your loop is complete. If you want to connect it to your receiver -er. add another separate single turn and connect the ends to the aerial terminals of your receiver.

To operate, using a radio with built in ferrite aerial, tune into station and rotate the radio for the best signal, then place the loop at right angles to the set and adjust tuning cap for maximum signal and rotate loop for the best reception or to null out unwanted signals.

There you are, easy isn't it? The size of the loop should be as large as possible depending on space available, since the 'gain' is proportional to the area of the coil. The smaller the loop the less gain it has. With a minor adjustment to the tuning cap the loop can be extended to include long wave as well. It will not improve all signals however, since it is something to do with the magnetic component of the signal, or something like that, but it works, and it's cheap: My loop cost no more than £2, it doesn't have to look good to perform right.

For the illiterate amongst you see the drawing below.



## Adrian Cooke

It's been a long four years behind the typewriter, and we've covered many different stories and seen several stations come and go. For our own format it would be fair to say that we've just had the two faces from the initial launch in December 1984 and again in February 1987 when the magazine received a new look.

The first major story was the launch of radio Monique, the original Dutch language service from the Ross Revenge which started on December 16th at 11.00 CET on 963 kHz, with Caroline's English programming moving to 576kHz. Monique was to continue until November 24th ahead of the collapse of the giant aerial mast. Also in that second issue an item on a Daily Mail report that Essex Radio's Eddie Blackwell was planning to put Laser 558 off the air. A charge he later denied. The plan was that a party would go out to the ship and cut the anchor chains. Mr Blackwell thought that some of his own staff members had been working for the offshore station and was hoping that former staff member Paul Rusling, who had been involved with Laser in that station's early days was the man for the job. However a meeting between the two was secretly recorded, with a copy of the tape being obtained by the Daily Mail.

Wavelength Number 3 opened with the news that two popular land based stations had closed. Sunshine Radio in Ludlow, Shropshire had broadcast a small scale ILR operation in an area previously unserved by any other channel, and had attracted much public support. So much so that when a BBC man planning a future local radio station arrived to look over the area he was told by a local official that the area already had its own radio service. Sunshine Radio was to return to the air for some Sunday and Bank holiday transmissions. Radio Jackie was not so lucky. Following a massive DTI raiding campaign Radio Jackie closed on February 4th 1985, even suffering a raid during her dying minutes. The publicity around the station at the time of the closure was enormous, and support came from people of all ages, including the local Labour Party MP, Harriet Harman who said she supported the principal of Community Radio being demonstrated by Jackie.

One of the most controversial moves in Offshore Radio history was the lead story in two editions of Wavelength starting with the August 1985 edition. Known as Eurosiege, the name given by Laser 558 jock Charlie Wolf, the British Governments blockade began on August 9th when the Dioptric Surveyor took up a position 150 yards from the portside of the m.v. Communicator the home of Laser 558. The argument was more theory than fact. The charge was that the Offshore radio stations were a potential threat to life with the danger of causing interference to Emergency services. Exactly why Offshore radio was likely to cause this more than any of the land based stations belonging to the BBC and IBA was never explained. The cost of the operation was put at £50,000 a month and the suggestion was that the IEA had initiated the action. At first the siege backfired on its organisers, the publicity surrounding the blockade caused the largest upsurge in support for Offshore Radio since the 1960s with television, radio and newspapers taking an interest at both local and national level. Our lead story in December took a new turn as on Tuesday November 5th the Communicator was escorted into Harwich harbour by the DTI's replacement vessel the Gardline Tracker. Everyone thought it was to be the end but the story of Laser was about to move into book two.

Publishing bi-monthly often worked as a disadvantage for Wavelength. We had missed the launch of Radio Monique by days for our first issue, and so with many readers already having read the news we found that stories had to be covered in greater depth, or from a completely different angle. In June 1986 the situation was turned to our advantage. East Anglian Productions had purchased the communicator after it had been put up for auction to settle outstanding debts. This news was released shortly after we had gone to press

with the previous month's edition. So we contacted EAP direct and the result was one of our most highly praised feature articles which made the issue a best seller, and only added to Wavelength's growing reputation. EAP's Bill Rollins was able to put the record straight on many rumours which were circulating at the time, such as Charlie Wolf, who was reported to be on the ship, this was denied, and souvenir hunters who had helped themselves to equipment from the ship were rebuked.

Technical articles also brought praise to Wavelength. Despite their popularity nobody else carried them. Our only regret is that we did not feature more. Steve West and Mark Thyme were the writers behind the DIY Radio series.

Despite the many happenings in the country Ireland took a back seat as far as actual news was concerned, although we did cover the closure of Radio Nova in March 1986. We thought that Anoraks UK were already covering this aspect of Free Radio in great detail, and anything we published would only be repeating what had already been said. However in Wavelength 12 Steve West started what was to be the Anorak feature of all time. Four Go Mad in Ireland, a collection of stories and interviews from a week of travels around the republic. A second series was started in June 1988. The radio situation in Ireland was unique, a never to be repeated experience. After all where else could you turn up on the doorstep uninvited, and be given a tour around the station, and off the cuff interviews. Martin Block of Q102, and Bob Powell, late of Sunshine 101 were two of the many people we spoke with, but the amazing thing was the warmth of the welcome which was no different in the city to what it was in the country.

In December 1986 Laser again took the headlines, this time with the relaunch as Laser Hot Hits. The return had been expected, but many technical problems, and perhaps too much of trying to recreate the past meant that this project failed from the start, or did it? Laser 558 made many stations take a new look at their music policy. Laser Hot Hits with its set of lively American Voice Overs had its production techniques "borrowed" by LLR. IDs such as "Turn it up loud and rip off the Knob" found their way to Radio City, Radio Nova and Chiltern Radio to name but three.

February 1987 saw a new look to Wavelength. The number of pages increased, there were new title headings, and our familiar two column layout was changed to one reading right across the page. The reaction was favourable. Not so when we chose to replace the Short wave news section with a simple loggings table. Wavelength had been the only regular source of printed Short wave news from the United Kingdom within a Free Radio publication. We knew we had made a serious mistake. After two issues, the Short Wave feature section returned in October 1987.

Wavelength has been critical of certain aspects of the Free Radio World. One campaign which was regularly voiced was that stations, on the Short Wave bands in particular were just causing trouble for themselves by not thinking about which frequencies were used. I don't think that everybody listened, but at least we tried. Whilst not trying to pretend that we were a hard hitting investigative journal we have managed to cover some interesting aspects of Radio over the past four years, although on occasions such as the relaunch of Radio Sovereign (August 1987) we found the story quite by accident.

One of the most stimulating aspects of Wavelength has been the ability to take a critical look at what is happening in Free Radio. Our regular team of writers Andy Walker, Neil Fraser, Steve West, Mike Ross and Mark Thyme all found creative words to look at what was occurring around them, sometimes, and here I include myself this lead to criticism, but perhaps that is what it was all about.

## Steve West

Wednesday July 1st; Left Cavan and detoured to Balturbet and Ernside Radio. No problem spotting this station as their lattice mast and FM beam stood out a mile, it just took us some time to find our way around to the studios. Once that we had convinced them that we weren't from the P&T we were shown around the station that was set up in a number of portacabins, with the tx in what looked like a portaloo!

Leaving them we headed south back past Cavan to Ballyjamesduff, home of Breffni Radio. This was another station that took some finding, especially if you tried to follow the directions given by the locals (see last series) and in the end it came down to driving around until something showed on the frequency counter. Breffni was located in a bungalow in the middle of nowhere with the medium wave tx in an outhouse and the OB studio in a caravan outside. Inside, the studios were much the same as others that we had seen throughout our trip; Two decks, cassette decks for ads and jingles and an eight channel mixer. A bit cramped, but no different to the majority of others.

From Breffni we zigzagged across to Longford and Independent radio Longford. The FM signal from this station didn't seem very good, and it wasn't until we were at the station that we learnt that we had been listening to the FM link, a minute tx which was sitting on the floor of the studio hallway. We also heard of the problems caused by a previous station in the town: apparently they had opened up, taken a load of money for advertising then disappeared. Then IRL had come along and found a few problems in getting people to part with their money!

While at IRL they mentioned a station that had opened up in the small village of Legan, midway between Longford and Mullingar. Legan Local Radio did not appear on the latest Anorak list so we decided to investigate, since we were going that way anyway, but once again we found ourselves chasing around the countryside looking for the station. (Legan village consists of a dozen house scattered across two or three square miles: not easy to find one with a station in) This was eventually traced to a house, the occupants of which were quite surprised to be the objects of such attention. LLR, which was only on FM had it seemed been started by the "owner" to give his children something to do during the school holidays. The studio was a disco set-up in a caravan next door and the DJ, who couldn't have been more than fourteen, was playing her favourite records for all her friends. The tx was a homebrew affair built by the father, about 20W into a dipole, despite which it managed quite a good signal into Mullingar, our stop for the night. Before finding the B&B we dropped by Midway, Mullingar's country and Irish station, home of the converted pmr tx (see last series) and then to Radio West, home of one of the few Free Radio programmes put out by the Irish stations. This was now calling itself Radio 3 West or National Radio 3, but apart from some new paintwork and logos (the car stickers raised some eyebrows back in the UK) little had changed from the last visit.

Thursday July 2nd: Left Mullingar, with a detour to the West tx site; this as last time, is stuck out in the middle of a field, and comprises generator hut, tx portacabin and diesel tank with a lattice mast. Grabbed some photos and then back to the car and away to Athlone, home of Signal 102 (I wonder where they got their jingle package?) Very quiet here with the dj listening on the headphones and the newreader sitting and reading the paper (for the latest news?)

From Athlone to Ballinasloe, home of Kandy Radio. First we traced the MW site, which was on a farm just outside the town with scaffold pole mast and Headie Eddie tx linked on FM. Surprisingly we couldn't pick up the FM on the car radio even as we headed towards the studios in the town. These were in the upstairs of a former printworks, with a large number of "dangerous structure signs around. This we were told by the operator who had gone out to a local shop while a tape was playing and who returned after we had gone through the place and taken the photos was only a temporary setup pending a move to a new site. The reason for the poor FM signal was because half the aerial had fallen off ("Well the tx gets warm, but it works"). Needless to say they had disappeared by our next visit in 1988.

Leaving Kandy, we headed for Galway, but the only local station we could find was KFM, a few miles West of the City. We eventually managed to find the studios, on top of a hill at Moycullen in what appeared to be a newly completed house, with the dipole aerials up the hillside a bit. At first we thought that the site was deserted, but then saw the dj in the upstairs studio. The house was completely empty except for a few items of furniture the FM tx and other components scattered around the kitchen. The studio had much the same as other stations, the records piled around the upstairs room, but the view through the massive picture windows was something else: looking across Lough Corrib and most of Galway it is the best I've seen from a studio window. It was explained that the stations we had listed for Galway had closed down, the last one only the previous week and that the nearest ones were in Tuam to the north and Ennis to the South. Since we were heading that way we decided to head for West Coast Radio in Ennis. This was above a record shop and, as I have said before, resembled the majority of other small local stations. The Co-owner (or whatever), Tony Garland was quite chatty: It seems that he came from Brighton and lives in Ennis, and knows BBC Grandstand presenter Desmond Lynch who comes from Ennis and lives in Brighton but for some reason they both tend to miss meeting each other when each visits the other's town (or something like that; see A.Cooke for details.) The FM tx was a surprise: a converted Pye Westminster pmr rig which seemed to be run directly off the mains via a power supply marked 12v but on investigation turned out to be giving twenty times that (nobody told the op that until he got a shock from it!)

As a foot-note to this part we revisited WCR in 1988: by now they had moved into much better accommodation and were using 'professional' (ABC Radio) transmitting equipment. The studios had been vastly improved, all due to them joining in with some local businessmen and getting the necessary finance. The intention is to go for the local radio franchise when it appears, but already another group has appeared claiming that they would provide a 'proper' local radio service, although at a public meeting they were unable to say how they would do this - or what was wrong with the existing WCR service. How far they will get remains to be seen.

Friday July 3rd: Left the B&B at Ennis and South to Limerick. Our first radio site of the city was of Radio Lumini and City Centre Radio on opposite sides of the road. We had heard both stations the previous year, which had prompted us to forget Limerick and try elsewhere, but this year only Lumini was on the air, although op 'John the Man' tends to shut down when he goes away on holiday. The other two stations in the city were Hits 954, with more than a few well-known Offshore and landbased faces, and - no more than a few houses away - Sound Channel. 954 were not too keen on letting us take pictures of the studio, which used some of the former London Radio Sovereign equipment, since they wanted to keep it a secret or something - from their rivals. Sound Channel were equally cagey about their setup, but were in the process of moving from the third floor to the basement of the same building.

From Limerick, and deciding to forget Kerry because of time we headed for Tipperary Community Radio (no different to last time), North Cork Community Radio in Mallow (no change here either), WBBN in Cork (Nothing new) and Community Radio Youghal. The Cork scene had not changed very much with WKLR, WBBN and ERI the main stations with a couple of smaller operations. Once again we tried to get into Dungarvan Community Radio and having found the elusive "Ben" (station owner) at the local tv shop we were told that they were rebuilding the studio and we couldn't see it. Finally into Waterford and having found a B&B for the night, dropped into ABC, who were getting ready to move around the corner to new studios above a pub and surgery (not much comment you can make) That evening we drove over to Clonmel to CBC, who were shut up in their keep for the night, and Centre Radio who let us in despite it being fairly late in the evening. Once again, little had changed.

Saturday July 4th: Headed north to Kilkenny in brilliant sunshine, dropped in at KCR to admire their MW tx: since the previous year this had been rebuilt with a very nice pi-tank, new chassis etc, though it was still spread out across the table. Output was about 400w from 2 813s driven by an 807 with 4 813s in the modulator. On FM, the same tx was still being used although the polarisation had been changed from vertical to horizontal. From Kilkenny to Carlow and CLR (Carlow Local Radio, where, once again, nothing had changed. Carried on to Dublin where we spent a couple of hours trying to find a way up the M sites on three Rock Mountain and then our final station call of the year at Tallaght Community Radio with quite a nice wood panelled studio console. Then it was North to Larne and the evening ferry home.

There you have it a bit rushed, this being the final issue of Wavelength, but yet another successful anoraking over. We returned again in 1988 for a final circuit of Ireland before the big closedown, this time managing to cover the two areas omitted before: Donegal and Kerry. In cases where we have visited stations each year, few changes - if any - have been noticed, with one or two exceptions. Some have disappeared without trace, others have appeared in their place. One thing that did attract our attention in 1988 was that a lot of stations had improved their transmitters: certainly ABC had sold a lot of FM txs. As a result I have drawn up an Anorak "Book of Records" as follows:

Most amazing studio Set up:	ERI(Cork) 1988
" " " " "	(ie that it works): Westside Radio 1987
Best tx/link set up:	Q102 1987
Worst tx/link set up	Boyneside Radio 1986
Worst tx:	Boyneside Radio 1986
Best Studio Site:	KFM (Galway) 1987
Worst Studio Site:	Kandy Radio 1987
Most lethal tx:	Radio Dublin 1986
Most improved station:	WCR (Ennis) 1988
Best Welcome::	Laois Community Radio/WCR Ennis 1986/88
Worst Welcome:	Radio Dublin 1988

In the past three years, during three visits to Ireland, I have visited over 80 stations, driven over 6,000 miles, taken over 700 photos and recorded over 250 hours of tape of a radio system the likes of which will probably never be seen again.

Of the 80 plus stations visited, often with no advance warning, almost all were happy to let us in to see the studios, equipment, cups of tea, etc. A far cry from 'local' radio in the UK, where you are lucky to get past the first guard at the gate. Whether this will be true when the new stations come on remains to be seen. I hope that these articles have given the average reader an idea of what radio was like across the Irish Sea, perhaps in the not too distant future Three Go Mad in Ireland: The sequel might appear somewhere.

So what of the future? The promised new licences loom on the horizon, but will these turn out to be a false dawn, the only ones to be issued, or will we see more appear in every town and village? I wait and see. Perhaps Ireland can show the UK how a proper LOCAL radio system should work, something we can follow - when or if community radio gets off the ground here. Whatever happens, free radio will never sound the same.

OFFSHORE fans!!! Send only £2.00 and you'll receive within 2 weeks a set of mini-posters of the Reas Revenge, The Communicator and the former Dutch ship the Norderney, home of Radio Veronica, and exclusive to the Caroline Radio Club. Send to CRC, P.O. Box 319 - 2690 AH Gzand, The Netherlands. If you send £3.00 you'll also receive a sample issue of the Bi-lingual magazine (Caroline Radio News) with many articles and photos of Radio Caroline, Radio 819 and other Offshore stations.

Herewith I thank Editor Adrian Cooke for the very long time of corresponding and co-operation about the Offshore Radio Scene especially for the Magazine Offshore, and Offshore Magazine, for almost 4 years (!) I wish him a very successful career as a broadcaster and Actor. All the Best and hope to hear from Adrian via the media in the future. . .

Eduard Van Loon,  
Editor Offshore Magazine  
Po Box 319  
2690 AH 's Gravenzande.

Thankyou Eduard, This acting thing, it's only a hobby, Adrian.

I'm very sorry to read that you are giving up Wavelength for good. But at the same time I understand that it must be difficult to produce a magazine, and at the same time do other important things. Well, I'm happy that I once discovered your magazine, I've learned a LOT about Radio, and I have had many great times together with it. I wish you all the best with your future plans !

Ake Peterson,  
Södertälje, Sweden.

I am sorry to read that Wavelength will end its successful publication - an excellent source of information. I fully understand the problems - I also prepare a monthly column for Television magazine.

I'd like to thank you for your efforts with Wavelength over the past few years. An excellent effort.

With every best wish for your future success

Roger W Bunney  
Romsey, Hants, UK.

Just a note to express my regret at the closing of Wavelength, but being Christmas Time I will bury my sorrow and wish you every success with your future ventures. I will certainly miss your informative mag, and there seems little left now that Monitor has gone and Radio Fax also. . .

Dennis Starr,  
Bletchley, UK.

Today received Wavelength 24 and sad to read that Wavelength will reach an end with issue 25. I hope someone may take over or a new magazine starts up covering Free Radio.

Well as you know I started getting Wavelength from issue No.1 and have seen all the changes in the quality of the magazine since that first issue.

David Miller,  
Dunedin, New Zealand.

Mail can continue to be sent to Po Box 5 for the time being, we'll try and answer any individual queries as soon as possible. In addition there are a number of back issues available for Nos 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, just 50p each.

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## Neil Frazer

Popular authors will tell you that the hardest word to write is the first one. My problem starts with all the words after the first one, especially when it's a subject I'm involved in. Through Wavelength magazine and Free Radio I've met a lot of very nice people, sadly I've also met a great many crooks. The very nature of Free Radio requires it to operate like a wartime resistance movement, false names, mailing addresses, secret meetings. These tend to attract a criminal element, in turn the Government slaps penalties to the pirate radio operator which seem nothing short of vindictive.

Sermons over, what does the future hold for radio? Forget the 200-300 planned radio stations, ILR and the new incremental contractors will band together to block it. One of the planned National Commercial Radio stations will have financial problems and be taken over by a satellite TV/ Radio service.

Don't be surprised if a couple of Radio Newsheets or Magazines close this year; but I suspect another Free radio Magazine to appear, maybe within the next six months. It's also not unlikely that Now Radio will have some competition. Printed on glossy paper, with quality pictures and the backing of the record industry. It may also have a lot more input from legal radio stations in the UK and elsewhere.

For any Free Radio magazine I make the following suggestions - Don't sit back and wait for news and stories, get out there and chase them down yourself. Don't claim to supply the latest news from around the UK/World when it is clear that you don't. I know of one radio station that has a higher population audience reach than most Ethnic London stations, yet no mention is made of it in any publication. If you want to print rumours make it clear that the reader understands that it is, a rumour.

It would be nice if the ILR and BBC stations could get their acts together. Fortunes wasted on computerised playlists, overpaid DJs and Newsroom staff and a mass of other bodies who seem to be neither use or ornament. The forthcoming de-regulation may force radio bosses to cut waste on staff and equipment. The first station to cut their sales force, and put them to work on audience research could raise their audience levels overnight; more competition over musical format will give the listener a greater variety.

The next few years will bring great changes to radio. The 7/24 pirates may go but unlicensed operators will continue, so keep tuning the dial because a transmitter is useless without a listener.

Remember Centre radio, The First IBA station to go out of business? It seems that they never paid Alfasond for their final Jingle package. Based around the theme "At the Centre of everything" said package now seems to turn up everywhere. You will remember that at one time there were no less than three Centre Radios around the Irish republic, the package has also been resung and appeared on the Jingles 3 LP, etc. I suppose you have to find a way of recouping your losses somehow.

As ILR stations around the United Kingdom continue the "Great Frequency Con" by offering split services it should be pointed out that Radio Caroline have offered a split frequency service for some time now. It's called . . . Invicta Radio.

Whilst talking about Caroline can somebody tell me if the recent Charity fast was planned, or whether the Tender failed to arrive.